

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-15, and 17-28 are pending in this application. Claims 1-9 and 18-28 have been allowed. The Examiner objected to claim 16 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but he indicated it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner rejected claims 10, 12-15, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the reference of Cerni (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0080747 A1), and the Examiner rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the primary reference of Cerni in view of Ito (U.S. Pat. No. 5,162,863).

The Applicant and the Examiner conducted an Examiner Interview on March 21, 2007, in which no agreement as to the patentability of the claims 10, 12-15, and 17 was reached. The Examiner also discussed the patentability of the method claims found in claims 18-24 pursuant to the guidelines found in MPEP 2106. The Applicant suggests that these method claims provide for a physical transformation, rendering moot the patentability issue raised by the Examiner during the interview. An Examiner Interview Summary is attached to this Response to be made a part of the written record.

In this Response, the Applicant has amended the Specification at paragraphs [0023] and [0031] to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter within the prohibition of 35 U.S.C. § 132 has been added. The Applicant has also amended independent claim 10 to include the limitation previously found in claim 16 and has correspondingly cancelled claim 16. Further, the Applicant has amended dependent claims 12-15 to correspond to the limitation now found in currently amended independent claim 10. The Applicant submits that these amendments place claims 10-15 and 17 in a condition for allowance, particularly given that the Examiner had indicated that now cancelled claim 16 contained allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the Applicant kindly requests reconsideration and allowance of such pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above Response, the Applicant submits that all pending claims in the instant application are in condition for allowance. The Applicant respectfully requests an early action to this end.

Respectfully submitted,

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